



November 2010

Good News Abounds Throughout the District

The Tustin Unified School District continues to shine with academic excellence due to its hard-working students, dedicated staff, involved parents and community supporters.

The District held a special dedication ceremony for the new Orchard Hills School. The ceremony included guest speakers, special presentations and student entertainment. School tours also were conducted. If you haven't had a chance to see the new school, there are pictures posted on the TUSD web site in the Orchard Hills section.

Tustin Unified schools celebrated 2010 Red Ribbon Week, a national public-awareness campaign to promote drug-free choices and healthy lifestyles. All schools in the District planned various anti-drug activities and events during the week.

TUSD provides a coordinated program of drug, alcohol and tobacco awareness education throughout the year. Activities include student assemblies, parent meetings, "Every 15 Minutes" program, drug- and alcohol-free Grad Night parties and an intervention program for first-time suspended students called "Project Today," funded entirely by the Assistance League of Tustin.

The cafeterias at Columbus Tustin and Currie middle schools, and Tustin High School have received the Award for Excellence from the Environmental Health Division of Orange County. The award is given to food establishments, such as school cafeterias and restaurants, for excellence in food safety and sanitation practices. This is Tustin High's third year in a row to win the award. Currie also won the award last year.

TUSD's 2010 Scholastic Assessment Test (SAT) scores continue to be higher than California and national scores. High school students throughout the nation take the SAT each year. The test consists of math, critical reading and writing sections. The results are published by the College Board as part of the criteria used for admission to colleges and universities.

The District's average math score of 565 continues to be well above both the state average and national average of 516. The District's average critical reading score of 542 is also above both the state average and national average of 501. The District's writing score of 550 is much higher than California's score of 500 and the national average of 492.

Tustin Unified's total mean score of 1657 significantly exceeded the state mean score of 1517 and the national mean score of 1509.

For 2010, TUSD high school students outperformed students in California and the nation by 49 points in math and 41 points in reading. District students averaged 50 points over the state average and 58 points over the national average in writing.

Foothill and Tustin high schools have been recognized by Newsweek Magazine as two of the top 1,600 high schools in the nation. Both schools have received this prestigious honor several years in a row. There are over 18,000 high schools in the United States and to be on Newsweek's list puts Foothill and Tustin in the top five percent of all high schools.

Public schools are ranked according to a ratio based on the number of Advanced Placement tests taken by all students at a school divided by the number of graduating seniors.

Fifteen students from Beckman, Foothill and Tustin high schools have been selected as 2011 National Merit Scholarship Semifinalists by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

Over 1.4 million juniors in nearly 21,000 U.S. high schools entered the National Merit Program by taking the preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test last year.

The Tustin Unified students will compete for approximately 8,200 Merit Scholarship awards worth \$36 million. They were selected based on their scores in the SAT/NMSQT. The top scorers in each state, representing less than one percent of those competing, are selected as semifinalists.

Merit Scholarship finalists, based on high academic standards, personal activities, school and community recommendations, and SAT scores, will be announced next spring.

In addition, over 30 TUSD high school students have been named 2011 National Merit Commended Students by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

The students were recognized for their exceptional academic promise. They placed among the top five percent of more than one million students who entered the competition by taking the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Tests (SAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT).

For the latest news and information, visit the TUSD Web site at www.tustin.k12.ca.us. Have a healthy and joyful holiday season!